γένεσις

Wesleyan Magazine of Creative Arts

VOL. XXVII 1969 ISSUE 3

Editor: Karen Wickwire

Art Editor: Linda Dixon
Staff: Awilda Otero
Marilyn Murphy

Layout Editor: Lou Ellen Semler
Staff: Priscilla Campbell

Literary Editor: Margaret MacKenzie
Staff: Nancy Greer
Dotti Smith
Sharon Mays

Music Editor: Pam Newton
Advisors: Mr. Arch Beckelheimer
Miss Ann Munck
Dr. Leah Strong

Scribes: Seniors—Nancy Greer
June Shiver
Dotti Smith
Mary Beth Taylor
Karen Wickwire
Juniors—Margaret MacKenzie
Sophomores—Sharon Mays
Honorary Scribe—Ann Munck

SCRIBE'S ISSUE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

2. Print, Mary Beth Taylor
3. Midnight, poem, Gail Lehman
3. Untitled, poem, June Shiver
4. Grapple, poem, June Shiver
4. Untitled, poem, Gayle Lehman
5-8. Essay, The Ghetto Ethic, Nancy Greer
8. Print, Mary Beth Taylor
9. Untitled, Gayle Lehman
10. I Lost Him To The Land, poem, Cathy Coxey
11-15. Moon Compass, music, Dianne Dennington
16-17. Fantasy, painting, Karen Wickwire
18. Print, Mary Beth Taylor
19,20. In Praise Of Bleeding, Maude Laslie
21. Untitled, Maude Laslie
22. Photograph, Dr. Robert Everett
22. Untitled, poem, June Shiver
23. A Second Poem About A Bird, poem, June Shiver
23. Death, poem, June Shiver
24. Prayer, Nancy Greer
25. Untitled, Maude Laslie
26. Untitled, Maude Laslie
27-29. "Passacaglia", music, Cindy Hanna
30. Photograph, Dr. Robert Everett

Cover: Bessie's Ear, Print, Karen Wickwire

Cover Lettering: Linda Dixon

Mary Beth Taylor

MIDNIGHT

It's
cold inside—
and
the walls
are
sad with
us
as we sit
on
thread-
bare
comforters
(long since
void
of comfort)—
with
cold coffee
cups
clamped
'tween
quivering
hands—
and
talk of
living. . .

GAIL LEHMAN

Karen Wickwire

You are a mighty good person.
You sit and you scribble out verse on
The problems of man
In this age, You can
See it all clearly,
And nearly
Every year
You appear
At the charity
Ball. It's a rarity
For you to miss it.
You always look exquisite.
You are so very good,
And so very, very,
Misunderstood.

JUNE SHIVER

GRAPPLE

with me.
There is a tightness in my knuckkles.
My muscles long to strain
against the pull of your hands,
Just as my mind has been straining
against the pull of another's
for so long.
Grapple with me, and win.

JUNE SHIVER

Buddy—
moots and
Feet
prints—
Slung-over
cover
coats—
hangin' on
dorm-nobs—
yellow
and
pokie-swiss
opaque (green
and
blue)
bumber-chutes . . .
here
there
everywhere . . . .
So
much
protection
Ponder
(do)—
would
one
take a
shower
with
a
slicker
on?

GAIL LEHMAN

THE GHETTO ETHIC

Perhaps this attempt to get inside the ghetto mentality will only leave you, the reader, with the same sense of disappointment in white America that I feel; yet how am I supposed to betray my American heritage and blue-blood? Well, baby, that's the shape with black America.

The black ghetto is not necessarily a slum, although a slum may be and frequently is its actual physical location. C. Eric Lincoln defines the black ghetto as:

> "a section of the city which has enforced boundaries, visible or invisible, which shut in the people of one race and minimize their contacts with the larger society as effectively as did the island community of the original ghetto (i.e., Jewish) . . . "

White America built the walls of the ghetto of white racism. Why is it so strange that the desperate citizens of the ghetto seek to burn the walls down? But white America knows what they cannot know: the walls of the black ghetto cannot be destroyed by fire. Mr. Lincoln compares the walls of Alcatraz and Leavenworth to the invisible, but equally repressive and confining walls of the ghetto, but he says: "unlike the residents of Alcatraz, the people who live in the black ghetto are conscious of no offense against society." The black ghetto is a symbol of white rejection.

Following the Civil War, Freedmen were often unfortunate when it came to obtaining land; the government gave them no property, as it had been rumored. Robert Everett states that "for the majority of Negroes, however, a compromise between complete freedom and complete control had to be accepted." This racial compromise was the share-crop system, where the whites could exert a measure of control over blacks.

> "Negroes who had managed to gain land ownership by 1900 had reached a peak of approximately 20% of the total, while tenancy among Negroes remained stable at nearly 80% throughout the first 3 decades of the twentieth century."

In 1901 deportation was often discussed as the solution for the doldrums of the South. The Negroes were even blamed for the decline of the rice industry on the Carolina coast. So the failure of any facet of agriculture would naturally affect the farmers, and the Negroes were farmers alone. The decline in cotton and agricultural production resulted in mass migration of Negroes to northern industrial cities. And there they found wages three and four times the amount the South had offered. But is this really why the black man left the South? Everett says not—land and bread was *not* the reason, but prejudice was.

Because Negro areas are overcrowded, they are usually run down. Robert C. Weaver quoted one building and realty journal's statements on the Negro's entrance into Harlem:

> "Negroes were expanding by sheer weight of numbers; the streets they occupied were littered and dirty, the result of jam-packed buildings. . . . These conditions, as anywhere, produced crime, delinquency, vice. Not the innate character of the Negro, but the conditions under which he lived, were responsible."

The family group within the ghetto is dominated by a matriarchy, due to the missing father who deserts because he cannot provide for the family, or divorce, separation, or illegitimacy. But why does the black man desert? Negroes are a product of their past, as are all men; but their past was spent in slavery where conditions placed the male Negro in a difficult position. Slave owners did not recognize marriage between slaves, but carefully "bred" their slaves. Children were left with the mother, giving the Negro woman an early, exclusive interest in the family and forcing upon her full responsibility for its care. If a male and female slave were permitted to live together for any length of time, the Negro father (he could hardly be called a husband) had no control over his family or its fortune. His children could be taken away and sold, and often the father was sold away from his family.

A Negro slave was never "mister". If he lived with a woman—the closest thing to marriage—he was *her* man—Mattie's Jim, again denying him a position as head of the famliy. And if the white slave owner wanted Mattie for himself, the Negro male had to step aside.

This white exploitation of the female slave put the black mistress in the slave owner's house, tending his children. And there she has stayed, insured of a position and status in the white man's world, whereas the black man has never gotten his foot in the door. Why has the black man not overcome his past in a hundred years? Perhaps because the past has never died to allow him the transition from slave to citizen. A slave had to be accommodating and agreeable—he earned no rewards for being courageous or assertive. And white America has the black man in a slave stereotype—how can he be a man with courage and assertion?

The problems of black youth in the ghetto are not so much centered in the fact that they are black, but in the socio-economic structure which surrounds them.

> "Many of the ecological features of the Harlem Negro environment that impinge on personality development in early childhood are not specific to Negroes as such but are characteristic of most lower-class populations."

Overcrowding is a characteristic of the ghetto socio-economic level, resulting in neglect of the ghetto children's basic needs. There are three main needs I have chosen to elaborate upon: 1) identity, 2) intellectual and sensory poverty, and 3) succor. Identity in the ghetto depends upon the strength of Negroid elements present to develop an image of himself in the growing child—an image of success rather than failure. Intellectual and sensory stimulation is

gained through the environment early in childhood, but the ghetto household is devoid of such stimuli; the child, therefore, does not acquire these skills. In his crowded household he learns not to listen. But when he reaches school age he cannot adequately discriminate between what is important or unimportant, nor to disregard what is unimportant. Language is infrequently used in the home ("Get that over there."), so memory stimulation is at the minimum.

> "Because the adults speak in short sentences, of very simple structure, the lower-class child finds it very difficult to follow directions. He is not accustomed to hearing long, rambling sentences and cannot always follow through in the thought process."

Because the father is not there to bring home food or money, the mother is forced to leave the home and search for work; this deprives the children of their need for succor. After a hard day at work the mother cannot be expected to be in a mood to play with the children or to hear and deal with their problems as only a mother can. So the children starve emotionally.

An attitude of hopelessness is also a characteristic of the ghetto socio-economic level. The suppression of anger is often necessary in such a crowded environment, and is usually not redirected toward the original instigator. " . . . When the Negro directs his displaced rage against someone he loves, he does not express it but instead becomes depressed." This feeling of hopelessness spreads into the area of school, and it is known that the attitude the *child* holds toward school when he enters is greatly influenced by his family's attitudes toward schools and education. But aside from the child's attitude toward school, the attitude of the parents is that they are outsiders in a school system. They are afraid their child will receive harsh discipline if they make complaint, and those possessing the greatest degree of hopelessness fail to think a school would even ask for their opinions on any subject, and that it is impossible to change any aspect of life. Attempts to escape the rigors of living in a society which for them bears little promise for a better future is evidenced in Negro drug addiction, especially among juveniles—higher among Negroes than among whites; Negro high school drop-outs are far above the national average in numbers, again reflecting the same sense of Negro helplessness; Negro divorce rate is 5.1%, but 3.8% among whites.

There is a basic conflict between middle-class values and black ghetto values which must be put forward before a discussion of their ghetto values can proceed.

In the past, the black man had to give up his identity to be accepted. He was not treated as a man, i.e., a unique individual. White America fakes acceptance today when the Negro fakes WASP values; but as for the ghetto . . .

> "Spatial propinquity—i.e., physical nearness or accessibility—is the essential condition for the articulation of social roles by means of which common attitudes, values, and group identity becomes possible. . . . In short, the existence of the black ghetto is inimical to any possibility of producing a unity of spirit, a sharing of values, a mutual commitment to a unitary moral code."

Why can Americans accept Eastern Indians with their Hinduism, their saris, their foreign accent, even their skin, so distant from America's WASP (White-Anglo-Saxon-Protestant)—but deny a Baptist ghetto black (who wants less out of life than I, because he has never even *known* as much as I) the fundamental respect of a human being? Even if a black man adopts a white faith, white culture, white language, and voice, white economy, "it profits him nothing if he has not changed his skin." Americans will have to become color-blind before they begin to acknowledge ghetto people and not ghetto colors. America has a hang-up with black as being strange, and, therefore, bad. Just because a black man has no shoes and his sister thinks her rummage-sale 10 year-old hat is beautiful does not mean they have a "bad" set of values—in my estimation, naive perhaps, the middle-class ethic that condemns them possesses a set of values which is too narrow, too inhuman and highly unaesthetic and insensitive; to many Americans the "American Creed" (I use this phrase with all its references to worlds like forefathers, Plymouth Rock, and 1776) that binds all white Americans together is the antithesis of their own private social prejudices they harbor against Negroes . . . but they fail to realize this somehow. The problem, then, is not a conflict in two different sets of values (black vs. white), but a conflict *within* one set of values: because of the white conflict here, their behavior only a compromise. All Americans have the American Creed as a unifying factor in their nationalism to a certain degree, even if some call it our Judaeo-Christian heritage. But the black Americans have been denied citizenship from the start; aside from being forced to lose their original African languages and customs, white American has denied them the rights of human beings. I fail to see why this "American dilemma" does not bother white America more. (Britain has found themselves in a most unhappy situation, because of the conflict between their religious teachings and their social behavior.) Perhaps they have their ethics in one box and their prejudices in another . . . and neither box can be opened at the same time.

The existence of the black ghetto is theologically and morally unjustifiable. The Christian community, according to C. Eric Lincoln, cannot be a segregated community, because a segregated community does not provide for that interchange of culture, and, therefore, for the growth and development of all its members. Pauline philosophy says to the Ephesians that we are members of one another. If little children are raised in middle-class society, they are taught to make new people welcome—they are taught the American cliche, "melting pot", but how do you tell a child he cannot spend the night with a black classmate or go to his birthday party? You might have a hard time if your child spouted Sunday School axioms like "love

thy neighbor" or "God loves all the little children . . . "

"Sometimes we just weren't meant to understand
The over-fifty crowd;
At least, not until we
Grow up
Or die."

Because a man has a strong body odor does not mean he is *purposefully* dirty—when a WASP smells the same, I consider him to be twice as filthy. Why? Because the WASP has a bath-tub that can be used for bathing. The ghetto kitchenette might have a tub, but it has no water pipes: it is used for sleeping.

Values are relevant to the societal level. The former paragraph could be explained to a middle-class white if he were asked if his family used sterling silver tableware at every meal. Usually not. But upper-class Americans accept it as a matter of course, because they have the silverware *to begin with*. But the middle-class possesses an adequate culture around stainless steel . . .

Furthermore, the ghetto includes as part of its existence certain values. A few of these are 1) reality or welfare goals, 2) light skins, 3) money and material acquisitions, 4) churches' functions, 5) Negro business monopolies, 6) pride in community, and 7) Afro-American pride.

The ghetto blacks are concerned with reality or welfare goals. Whitney Young used this example:

> " . . . the opening to Negro use of restroom facilities in a Southern airport terminal may mean a great deal to middle-class Negroes, but little or nothing to the lower-class. Winning such a right would be of symbolic importance primarily to the middle class . . . the welfare values of the lower-class Negro can force . . . (the middle-class leadership) . . . to see tangible benefits in . . . (certain schools and public housing projects near or in their ghetto districts) . . . facilities wherever they may be built . . . "

Stoneberg sees one of the strengths of the Negro in his orientation to reality:

> "He elects to identify with his own lower class adults in terms of his occupational aspirations. He chooses to function as a member of his own cultural group instead of aspiring to function as a member of another group. According to the evaluations of psychological studies he is said to have a low self-esteem because he does not aspire to "better" himself culturally. He is reported to have bad idealization because he fails to idealize those beyond his own culture. It is only the Negro who attempts to function in a culture other than his own that experiences severe adjustment problems . . . "

The late Martin Luther King, Jr. affirmed this aspect of ghetto values when he proposed to white America that the Negro today is not struggling for some abstract, vague rights, but for concrete and prompt improvement in his way of life; " . . . what will it profit him to be able to send his children to an integrated school if his family income is insufficient to buy them school clothes?" According to Dr. King's analysis the word is NOW. His reason was that the " . . . Negro knows that no person—as well as no nation—can truly exist half slave and half free . . . "

It has been observed recently through the national media of advertising that " . . . the Negroes whose physical form is nearest the physical form of the dominant white group have the greatest advantages . . . " This is the way white America views the black man—the more conforming he is, the more acceptable he becomes. But black America has other ideas, with the rise of their racial pride and nationalism: a light skin can be a handicap, especially if it associated with "recent" miscegenation.

An explanation of the materialism that pervades the ghetto is contained in an explanation of Negro society's emphasis on money and material acquisitions. C. Eric Lincoln reasons that whites could have traditions of culture and attainment by virtue of their ancestors, yet be impoverished themselves; "since the Negro's family tradition seldom antedates the Civil War, Negro society . . . (has) . . . this undue emphasis . . . " And where does the money go? Money that could go for a new house goes into refurbishing antiquated apartments, or in conspicuous consumption which somehow helps them to forget the horror of living in the nation's Harlems. Mr. Lincoln quoted Richard Wurzburg as saying that lower-class Negroes "get into debt and have their wages garnished over frivolous purchases, seldom necessities."

In a community where possessing a black skin means automatic rejection, a segregated church serves functions other than as a religious center. It is a place for Negroes to feel wanted and at home. Here leaders could emerge with social and economic security. The total wealth of Negroes in northern (and also southern) cities contained an extremely important element in the value of church property. By 1926 there were about 5,000 Negro churches in the North and West and the average church edifice serving Negroes was valued at about $18,000 (as compared to $4,000 in the South). There is a distinct advantage for the Negroes involved within these segregated churches; the management, pastor, and ownership is controlled solely by the membership. The pastor, in turn, often spoke without fear of reprisal; he could and did often voice the protest of his congregation and of the Black Belt.

Negro business monopolies are a result of the entire system of color segregation in the U. S. and not from residential segregation alone. Examples of these businesses are undertaking establishments, barber shops, beauty shops, and hair-dressing establishments.

Pride in their ghetto community developed as a compensation for exclusion from the larger phases of the city's life. Man turns inward and develops what he can when he is excluded. Refuge for black America has been sought in the ruins of the moldering traditions of Africa. White rejection produced this recoil—African dress, handslaps instead of handshakes, African jewelry, African dances and art forms—which

has given every black man a complete heritage he never had before.

There are some facts we must face, and an answer to the ghetto problem *must* come . . . if of *necessity* alone: 1978 will find more than 17 million persons living in black ghettos where 12 million now live. Weissbourd and Channick attribute the black-power movement with having raised the self-esteem of American Negroes "and making them aware of their strength and their ability to control their own destiny." But a separatist solution would not work, they realize; it would only perpetuate the institution. They reported a survey made by *Fortune* magazine which found that only 5% of Negroes are against any form of integration and 93% want desegregation in schools, jobs, and neighborhoods.

So what alternative does this leave? Eliminate the ghetto walls that prevent men from knowing men. I have found three writers who have proposed *how* the ghetto could eventually be destroyed. Joan Buck, a teacher, proposes placing the ghetto child in school at the age of three or four—to get him before the social stimuli and lack of intellectual stimuli deform him. (Some ghetto children have no idea what their name is when they enter school.)

But what about the older blacks who will not have this possible benefit? On a large scale, Weissbourd and Channick propose creating a housing surplus to give Negroes the power to make a real choice as to *where* they want to live and in *what* they want to live. With overcrowding solved in this way, the high rents of the ghetto would disappear and increase their spending power.

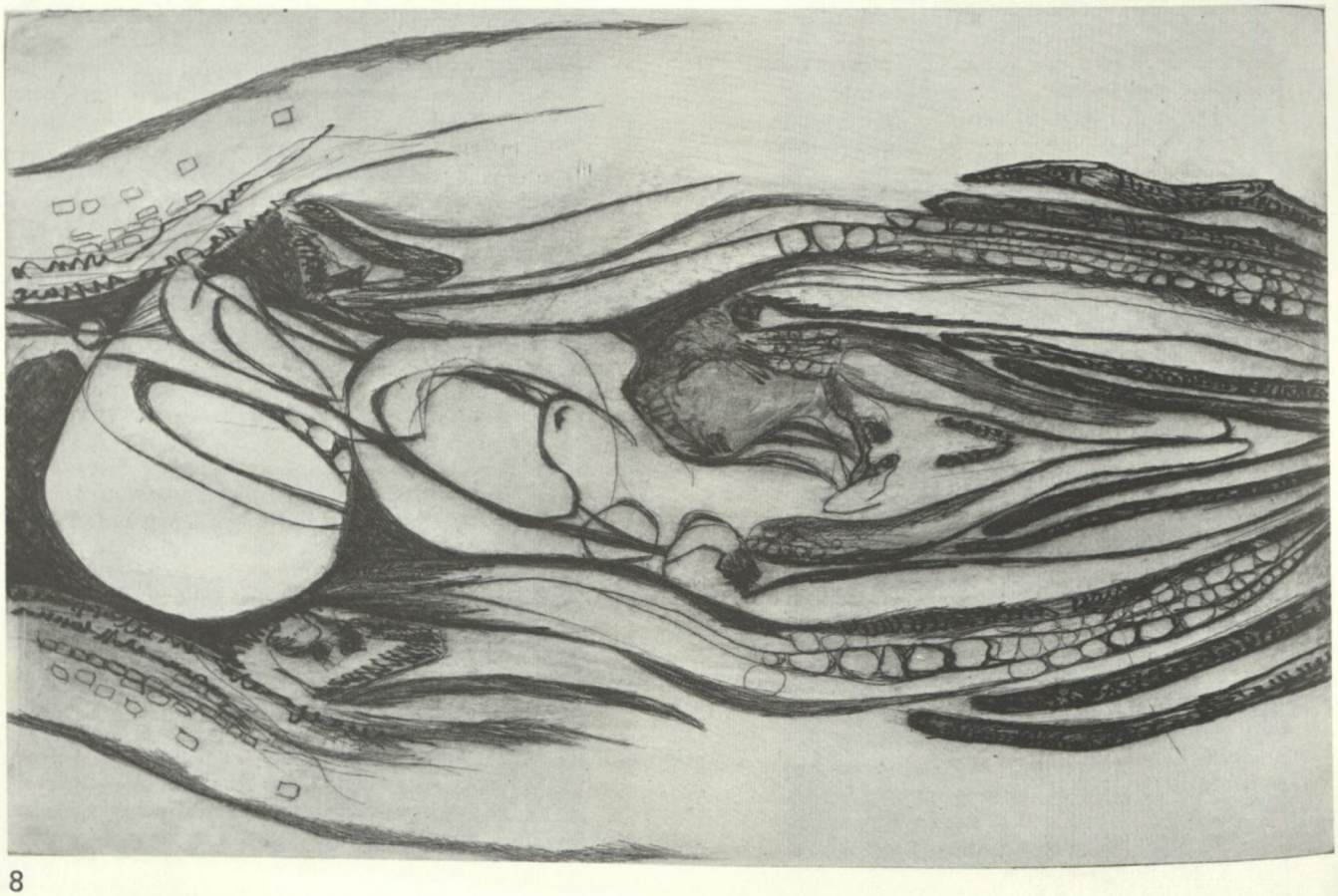
The death of the ghetto can become a reality when white men can talk to black men —not *down* to them. The ghetto will die when black men realize they are men and possess worthy opinions. Amitai Etzioni proposes the solution which is more idealistic and actually more difficult than the other two. It is the solution which worked for me, although at first it was torturous: small face-to-face meetings of whites and blacks. I do not mean civic leaders talking to ghetto leaders over dinner, but housewives talking to housewives, truck drivers talking with construction workers, etc. Only then will the term "black America" change from a social stamp to a mere biological fact.

My purpose here is not to find a solution for the ghetto problem—it is not so much the ghetto problem that *ultimately* must be solved, but the problem of white racism that must be solved by white America. It would be incorrect to say that adults alone possess prejudices, but there is a positive aspect of childhood—a delightful *ignorance*—which sees a simple; uncluttered and colorless world. I was raised in a racist society, but I was twenty years old before I discovered racism in our home.

No one can say they are without certain prejudices; but I hope all my children are colorblind.

"Sometimes we just weren't meant to understand
The over-fifty crowd;
At least,
Not until we're
Twenty-five."

—Nancy Greer



Margaret MacKenzie

Somehow you get tired of searching
When the taste lies bitter in your mouth
And the sound slaps your ears:
  Sounding and resounding
  Inside an empty head.
And the light is a yellow
You can't take for long
  Without begging
  For a little darkness.
Yet still you search—
  and lose half yourself
  on the way.
I wish someone would call
  My name
Just so I could hear it aloud:
  Confirm my existence.
Say: I am real and
    have an identity
    within my five letters.
All my thousand
  Maybe-dreams
Are altered by the yellow light
  When I see its bitter beauty
  Driving shadows from my mind.

NANCY GREER

Last night i kicked a rock allthewayover to some friends of mine's house and sat on the curb out front and watched the candle-light in the windows flicker onandoffandonandoffandonandoff and my vision wasn't very clear because something was in my eye at least i thought there was (can't be too sure of too much anymore) y'know and the lights flickered and blended and faded and there was only a greyand black-framehouse with no windows and then there wasnothing and i clung tothe curb with onehand and groped for myrock with theother. . .

GAIL LEHMAN

Lou Ellen Semler

I LOST HIM TO THE LAND

I lost him to the land
And watched the marshes swell with pride
that a master so long ago gone still survived
away
on a cold grey day
that yearned at the sea-tides-tune
for the wake of a sea-bedded-moon that
rose with his shadow
when he grew from a grandfather tree
longer than the land.
And I followed him down
down to his knees that prayed
and he stayed as bent as the limbs
and silent as the sun
till the world came to him.
Then I sent my heart soaring
like grey steeples on a Sunday-bell-morning
and watched as it caught in the sail of the wind
when I lost him to the land.

CATHY COXEY

Moon Compasses

Robert Frost ♩ = 63

Diane Dennington
5-1968

mf p mf p

1st ppp Mm

2nd ppp Mm

Alto ppp Mm

freely

Very mysteriously mp

I stole forth dim-ly in the drip-ping pause Be-

mp

stole forth dim-ly in the drip-ping pause Be-

mp

decresc. b

ppp

stole forth dim-ly in the drip-ping pause Be-

cresc. mf pp mf

tween two down-pours to see what there was. Masked moon had

cresc. mf pp mf

tween two down-pours to see what there was Masked moon had

cresc. mf pp mf

tween two down-pours to see what there was. And a masked moon had

p

spread down com-pass rays Ah

mf

spread down com-pass rays To a cone moun-tain

p

spread down com-pass rays Ah

pp ppp ♩= 80 mf marked

Ah Mm As if the fi - NAL

p mf marked

In the mud - night haze, As if the fi - NAL

pp ppp mf marked

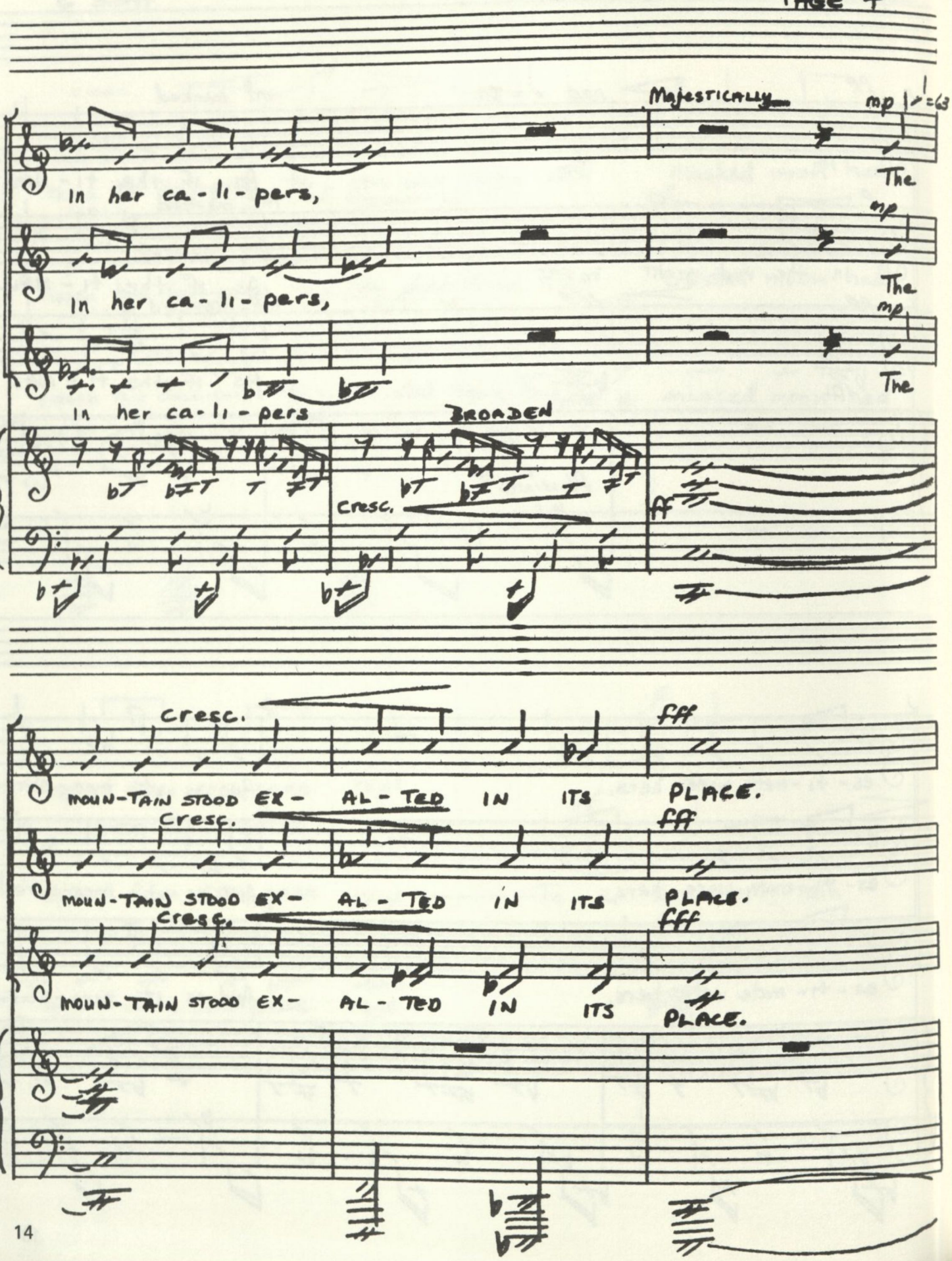
Ah Mm As if the fi - NAL

flowing

es - ti - mate were hers, f AND as it mea - sured

es - ti - mate were hers, f And as it mea - sured

es - ti - mate were hers, f And as it mea - sured


Majestically
mp
♩=63
In her ca-li-pers,
The
mp
In her ca-li-pers,
The
mp
In her ca-li-pers
The
BROADEN
cresc.
ff
cresc.
fff
MOUN-TAIN STOOD EX- AL-TED IN ITS PLACE.
cresc.
fff
MOUN-TAIN STOOD EX- AL-TED IN ITS PLACE.
cresc.
fff
MOUN-TAIN STOOD EX- AL-TED IN ITS PLACE.

pp

mp

pp distinct

So love will take be-tween the hands a face...

pp distinct

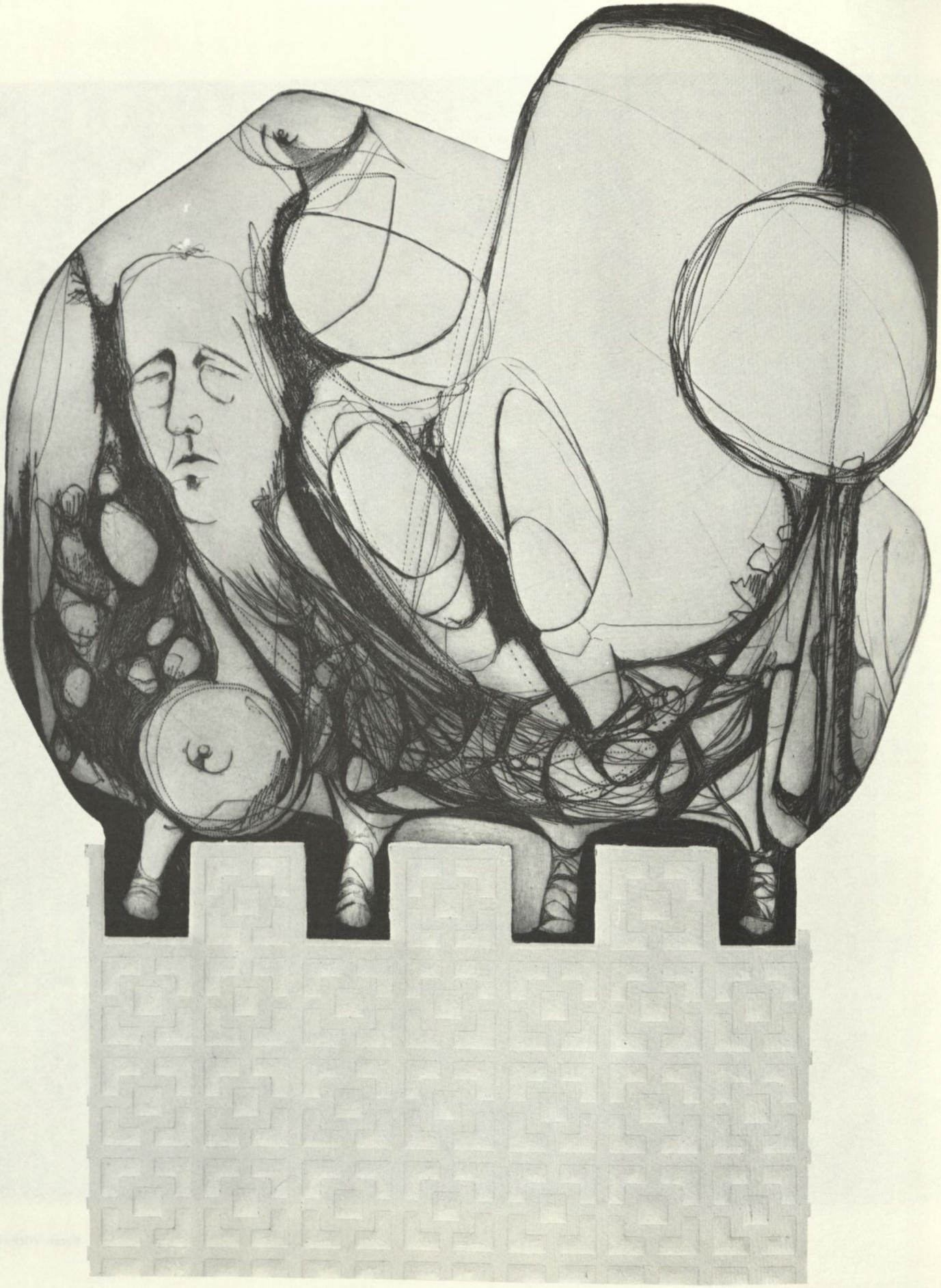
So love will take be-tween the hands a face...

pp distinct

ppp

So love will take be-tween the hands a face...

Karen Wickwire



Mary Beth Taylor

IN PRAISE OF BLEEDING

PART I
it is only a game
it is just a game—
You try too hard
you worry and you cry and you hurt
but it is only a game
it is just a game——
Spin a web of words and lose
yourself
mind
soul
in the grapevine jungle—

PART II
spin a web of words
and
I
will
become lost in them
and
I
will
never be able to leave
because
I
must
understand—
Observation: . non-verifiable
There
is
a
God—god
"I
can
not
give
you
a final
mathematical
proof
stating
that
this
is
true"—

PART III

Like canvas stretched across a frame
my mind reaches and cannot touch—
And the canvas is being filled
and my mind is being filled—
There can be no control—Things happen
my mind records—
I feel
I know
I become
and it hurts—

PART IV

Somebody close my eyes and let me rest
I
am
tired
and
I want to rest—
Do not talk to me of pain and tears and fear—
Please do not even begin—
You could never finish—
Where is the light—tunnels all around and there
can be no light—
You stay in the middle—never moving
how can you expect
to
get
to
the
light—

PART V

One day
I
was
reaching—for anything
And tomorrow
I
could
touch—anything—
is
the
line
so
hazy
that you
cannot
tell—
tell
where I am
who I am
why I am—

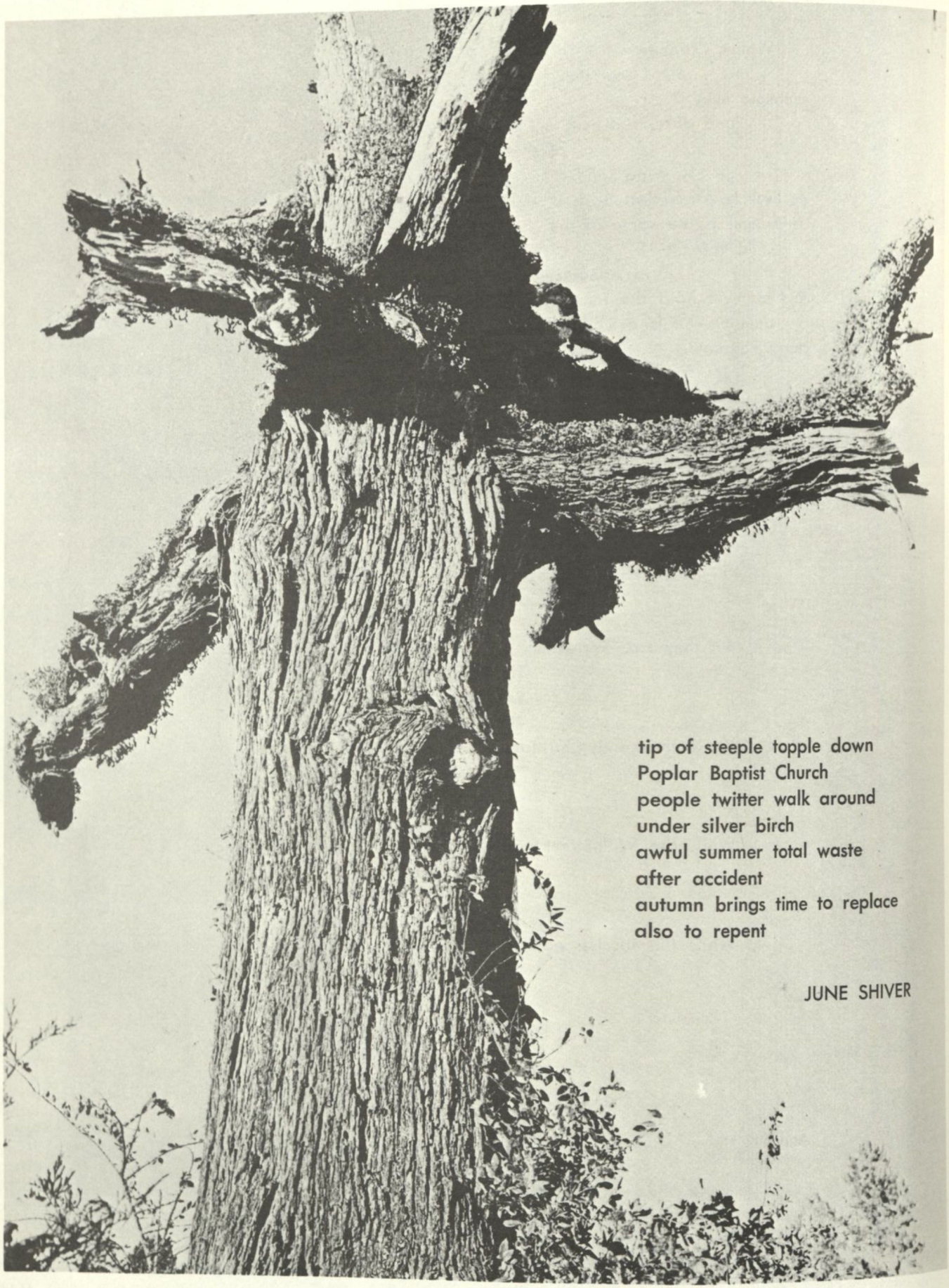
PART VI

is
the
line
so
hazy
that
you
cannot
tell
what is
behind the line
around
in front of the
line—
Lines are for
People
with
20-20
vision—

MAL

On the CBS evening news with
Harry Reasoner
for
Walter Cronkite
I saw the
enormous eyes
and distended belly
of a
starving child—
He lives in Africa but he is a world-child—
His hunger is the same as the hunger of a
child in Asia—
in Appalachia—
And his eyes hold the same mute—indefinable
question—he is a world-child—
Harry Reasoner
for
Walter Cronkite
told me the approximate
number of men
killed in Viet Nam—
and there were pictures—
young men—
thin and dirty—
carrying guns—
young men—
American and Vietnamese—
but they are world-men
They kill
and
They are killed
While the candy-Christian people
worry
about when to say
thee and thou—
While the Wall-Street-Puppets
erect another
green altar—
and
While the faceless political-pawns
appoint committees
to examine
and
to evaluate
the rebellious youth—
the misinterpreted unrest—
the revolution of the rebirth of conscience—
And still—
the
world child's eyes question—
And
the
world-man's only answer
is
Death—

MAL



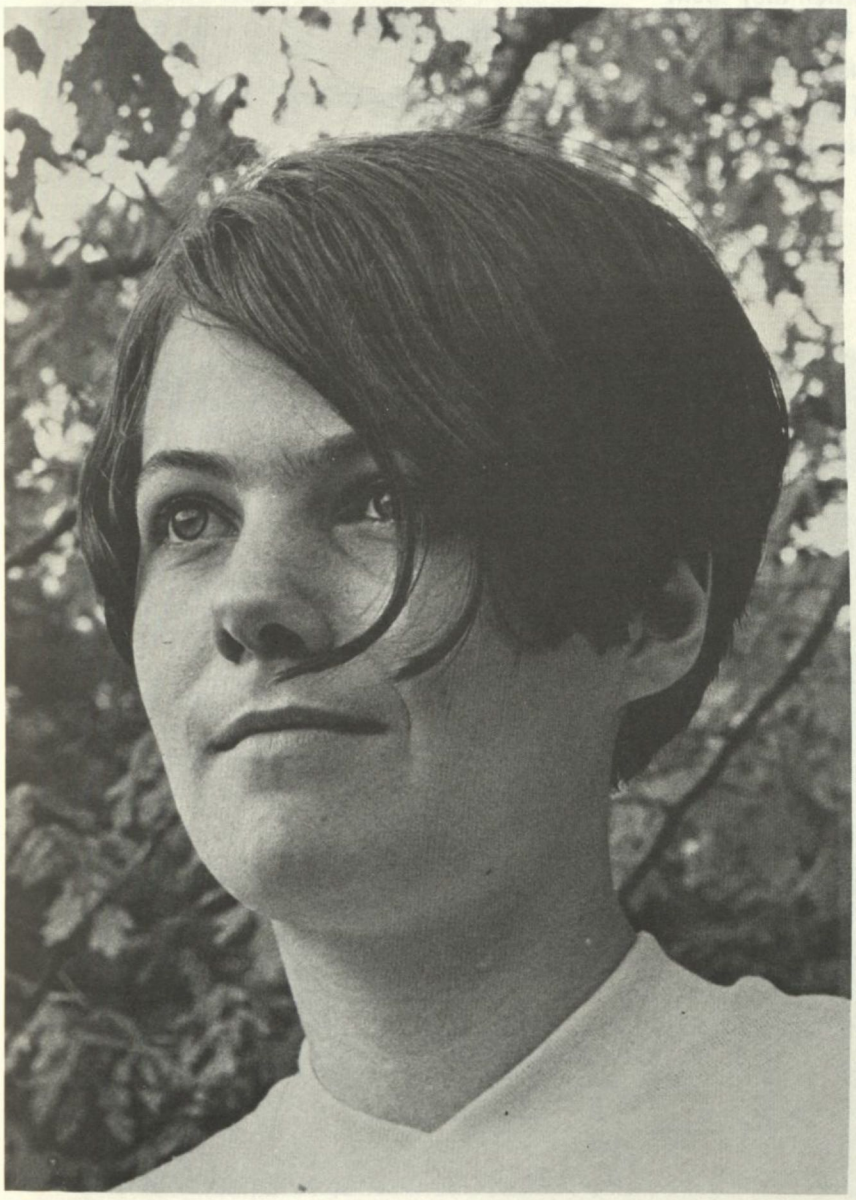
tip of steeple topple down
Poplar Baptist Church
people twitter walk around
under silver birch
awful summer total waste
after accident
autumn brings time to replace
also to repent

JUNE SHIVER

A SECOND POEM ABOUT A BIRD

In a moment
I will leave my chair,
The chair that I have been saving
For just such an occasion as the fall of a bird;
And I will sigh,
And touch the door that leads to your room,
Your room with its smells and things.
I swear,
I will not say a word.
You were once a thing of fire and gold,
Singing a song of rain and air,
And I, lost among the rhythms of some great scarlet bird,
Dreamed between your breasts of silver,
Dreamed of your breasts of silver.

JUNE SHIVER



June Shiver

DEATH

Come try to see
in time blown glass
reflections of
all things that pass.
In front of me,
beyond my eye
you cannot live,
you cannot die.
Through ancient grass
the lion stalks,
the native walks.
Black clouds amass;
the sun is blurred.
From cold I spring,
to cold I cling,
and give the word
that time has come
to touch my eye,
who cannot live,
who cannot die.

JUNE SHIVER

PRAYER

Dear God,
Thank you, oh God, for all TRUE Wallacites, for they are honest. Forgive those Nixonites, for they meant to vote for Wallace.
Thank you, oh God, for grits and hominy — for that is the way, the light, and the truth. Teach us the way of rice and hash brown potatoes for breakfast.
God, forgive the Ku Klux Klan for their hidden identities —they all have their crosses to burn . . . uh, bear.
Praise the color-blind God—he's not trying to win friends and influence people; he's already written a best-seller.
Thank you, oh God, for our plastic Jesuses, but forgive us when they melt.
Thank you, oh God, for our St. James' versions, for they are easier to misquote.
But most of all . . . thank you for the black jesus and the white jesus: Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy.
Amen.

Nancy Greer

Nancy Greer

My eyes are like windows in a room made dark . . . . . .
by disillusionment—
Sometimes I look out
but no one
can ever
look in—
and
the sunflowers—
so right this morning—
seem artificial
in the dusk—
in the dying day
tremulous light fading
make the sunflowers
look
clandestine and
ambiguous—
Sunflowers are supposed to be
tall
and
always
reach
for
the
Sun—
and so
etcetera world
what justifies the night—
Night makes sunflowers
reach for
fake and phony things
like
moon-stars
and
sunflower become wrong
at night—
The moon can never be the
Sun—
Somebody
help them—
Somebody
make
it
day—

MAL

Mary Beth Taylor

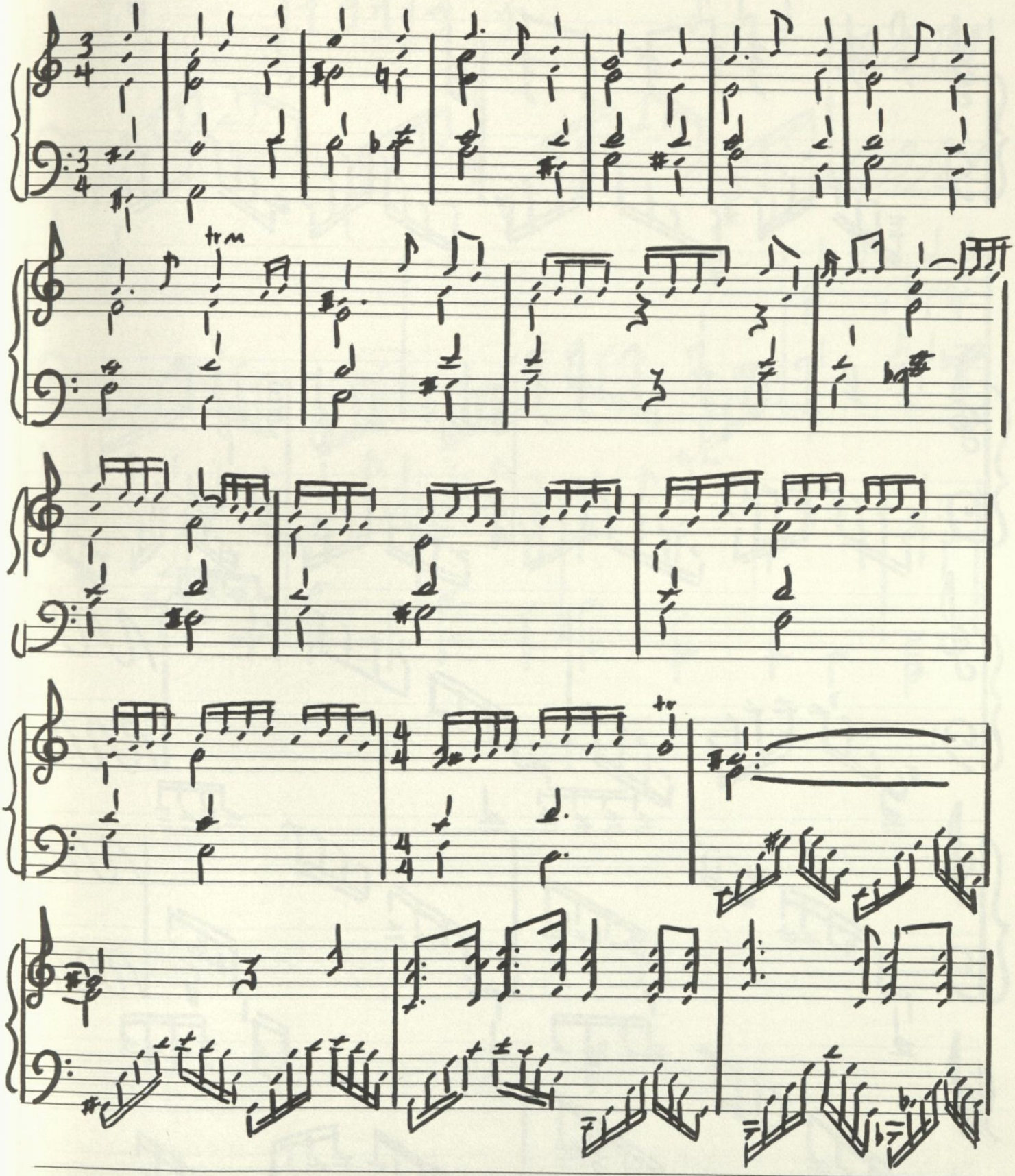
I had dreamed of
running
through
fields of wild grasses
blowing
in
free and cool
and
happy winds—
Straight and long hair
turning to prisms
with sun games—
a bunch of
magic multi-colored
flowers
clutched in one outstretched
hand—

The other waving pain away
while trying
to capture
the velvet air—
I had dreamed of
running
through
fields of wild grasses
like some mad Gypsy—
Alone and Proud
and
Unafraid—

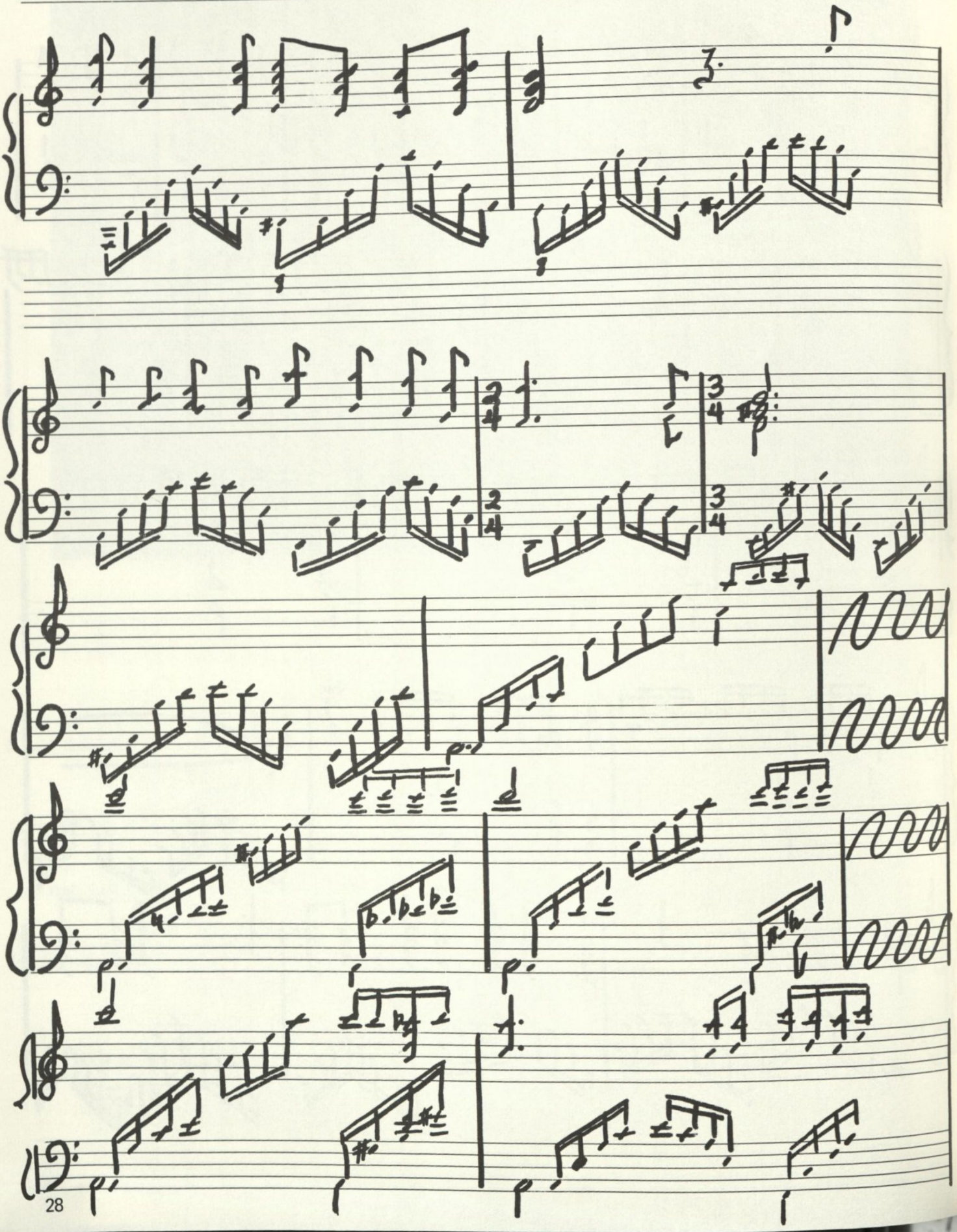
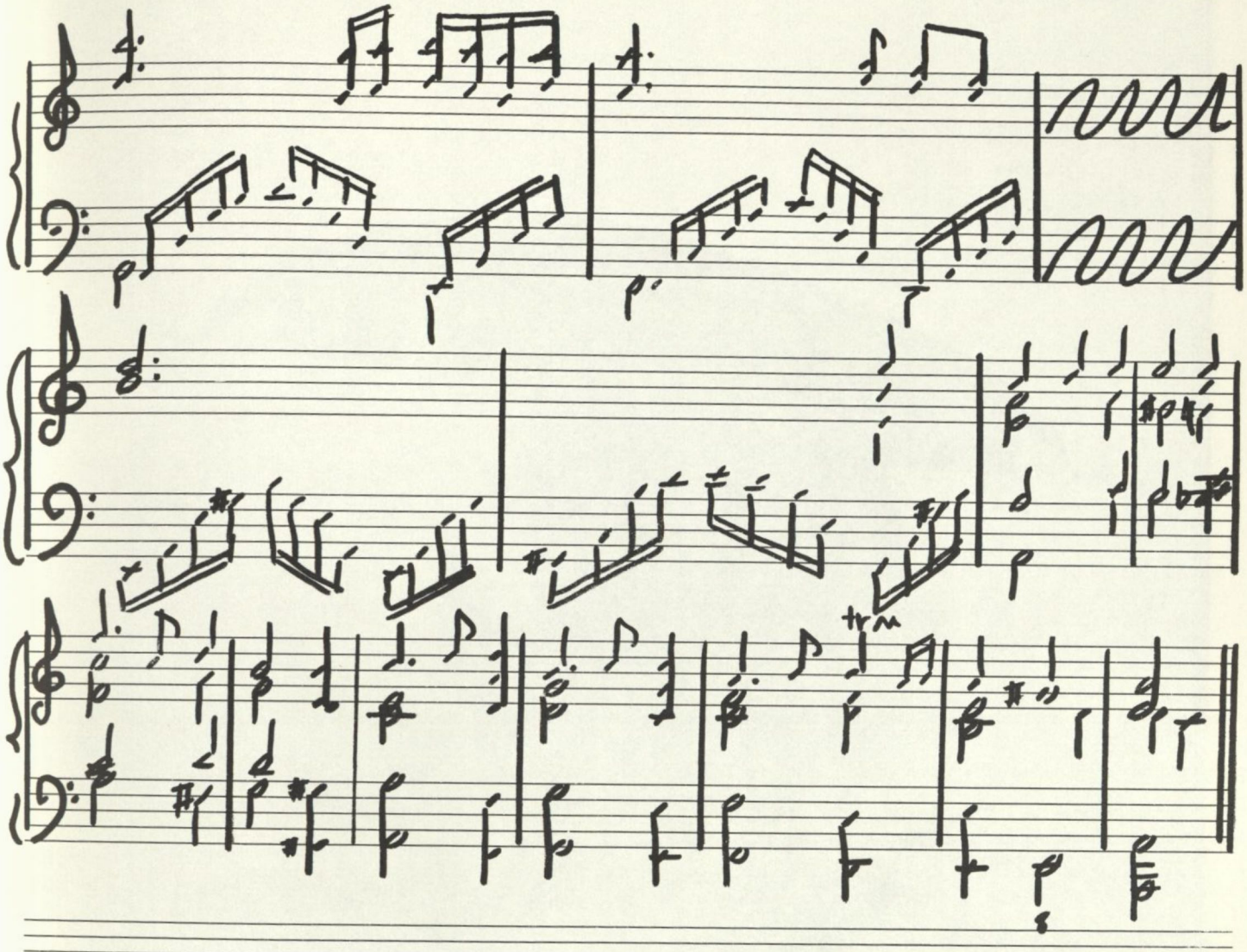
MAL

Passacaglia

Cindy Harra
March 10 '69



Cindy Hanna



Cindy Hanna